कल्याण मंत्री (श्री बलवंत सिंह रामूवालिया): (क) और (ख) मध्य प्रदेश और महाराष्ट्र राज्य सरकारों से सूचना मांगी गई है और उसके प्राप्त होते ही सभा पटल पर रखी दी जाएगी।

Child Labour in Hazardous Industries

216. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified such hazardous industries in the country in which Child Labour have been engaged;

(b) if so, state-wise details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by the Government under the law?

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) Employment of children below 14 years of age is prohibited in seven occupations and eighteen processes listed in Parts A & B of the Schedule to the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. The Act extends to the whole of India.

(c) A part from enforcing the various provisions made under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, there are protective provsions in various labour laws as well, such as the Factories Act, 1948, the Mines Act, 1952, the Motor Transport (Workers) Act, 1961 etc. The approach of the Government is to implement all the child-related provisions of the laws in a harmonious fashion. Enforcement machinery at the Central and State level exists to enforce the provisions of these Acts. Employers are liable to be prosecuted for violations of the provisions of the Acts.

Funds Earmarked to Super Bazar for PDS in Eighth Plan

217. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the funds provided by Government for Super Bazar for the Public Distribution System during the Eighth Five Year Plan are inadequate to meet the growing needs;

(b) if so, the funds earmarked during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(c) the allocation made to different departments particularly for furniture, textiles and grocery under Super Bazar;

(d) the year-wise details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) No funds are earmarked by Govt. of India for Super Bazar, Delhi for the Public Distribution System during the Eighth Plan. However, Govt. of India provide financial assistance to the Super Bazar, Delhi for modernisation, renovation and expansion.

(b) The budget outlay approved for the Super Bazar, Delhi for the Eighth Plan for the prupose as stated at (a) above was Rs. 2.0 crores only.

(c) It has been reported by the Super Bazar, Delhi that no department-wise allocation of funds are made by them.

(d) and (c) Do no arise.

Increase in price of Cement

218. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been unprecedented rise in price of cement during the last three years as compared to the prevailing price at present;

(b) whether Government have made any efforts to bring down the price to the level of 1994-95; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) No, Sir. There has been no abnormal increase in the price of cement during the last three years. During 1993-94, the price did

not increase due to fall in demand and general recessionary conditions. During 1994-95 price increased on an average by Rs. 20—25/- per bag of 50 kgs. cement. This was mainly due to increase in the price of inputs, cost of fuel, transportation and overheads. During 1995-96 prices have been stable except during the period December—March which is a period of peak demand for cement. There were also short term rises in prices in a few markets like Bombay due to temporary shortages caused by transportaion bottlenecks, strikes, etc.

(a) and (c) The control on price of cement has been removed with effect from 1st March, 1989. The industry has also been delicensed. Government has been encouraging creation of additional capacity and higher production of cement so that there is a healthy competition in the market and control on price. Government is providing all infrastructure support to the cement industry such as supply of coal and rail wagons on a priority basis.

Extension of Benefit to SC/ST converts to Islam

219. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the creteria adopted by the Government to consider the request for including the Dalit Christain under the SC/ST category;

(b) the reasons for which Government has come to the conclusion that this benefit should only be extended to SC/ST converts to Buddhists, Sikhs and Christianity;

(c) the reasons for which the SC/ST converts to Islam is excluded and whether such a decision will not amount to discrimination on the basis of caste and ultravires of the Constitution; and

(d) whether Government will consider extending the benefit to SC/ST converts to Islam?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (c) At present, persons belonging to the Scheduled Tribes are recognised as such irrespective of the religion which they profess. However, persons who belong to religions other than Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism can not be deemed to be members of the Scheduled Castes regardless of their caste of origin. The criteria adopted for the specification of Scheduled Castes are extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of the traditional practice of untouchability. The removal of the bar on recognition of Christians of Scheduled Caste origin as Scheduled Castes is under consideration of the Government in the context of claims that they continue to be subject to disabilities arising out of the practice of untouchability even after conversion.

(d) The matter is under examination.

Vocational Training in Tribal Areas

220. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any centrally sponsored scheme is under implementation in the State of Madhya Pradesh for providing vocational training in Tribal Areas of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the general response of the tribals of the State towards the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The scheme of Vocational Training in Tribal areas was introduced in 1992-93 and six Vocational Training Contres have been sanctioned to the State of Madhya Pradesh so far.

(c) The information is being collected from the State Government and will be laid on the Table of the House, on its receipt.